

MAR 13 2015

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO CONSULT THE NA KUPUNA TRIBUNAL TO FORM A WORKING GROUP TO DETERMINE HOW THE NA KUPUNA TRIBUNAL CAN BEST ASSIST THE COURTS AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN CHILDREN IN MATTERS RELATING TO CHILD CUSTODY AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM THEIR HOMES.

1 WHEREAS, one of the most vital resources to Native
2 Hawaiians are their children; and
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4 WHEREAS, it has been reported that approximately fifty
5 percent of the foster care cases under the jurisdiction of the
6 Department of Human Services involve Native Hawaiian families;
7 and
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9 WHEREAS, the practice of hanai exists within the Native
10 Hawaiian culture to address the foster care of children; and
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12 WHEREAS, various regional groups' kupuna have organized the
13 Na Kupuna Tribunal to represent them as a whole; and
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15 WHEREAS, kupuna groups have assisted in family court
16 matters involving the foster care and hanai of Native Hawaiian
17 children; and
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19 WHEREAS, kupuna groups do not presently have an official
20 role in family court matters involving the foster care and hanai
21 of Native Hawaiian children; and
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23 WHEREAS, the Na Kupuna Tribunal has demonstrated success in
24 past experiences of assisting family courts, in Hawaii and on
25 the mainland, in matters regarding the foster care and hanai of
26 Native Hawaiian children; and
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28 WHEREAS, the Legislature believes that it is worthwhile to
29 determine how the Na Kupuna Tribunal may best assist family
30 courts in matters of the foster care and hanai of Native
31 Hawaiian children; now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015,
3 that the Department of Human Services, in consultation with the
4 Na Kupuna Tribunal, is requested to convene a working group to:

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6 (1) Determine how the Na Kupuna Tribunal can best assist
7 the courts and Child Protective Services regarding the
8 placement of Native Hawaiian children who have been
9 removed from their homes;
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11 (2) Determine how the Na Kupuna Tribunal can best assist
12 Native Hawaiian children who have been removed from
13 their homes; and
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15 (3) Review the manner in which courts handle child custody
16 cases involving Native Hawaiian children; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group include
19 representatives of various stakeholders, including:

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21 (1) The Office of Hawaiian Affairs;
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23 (2) The Hawaii Foster Parent Association;
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25 (3) The Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition;
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27 (4) The Hawaii Youth Services Network;
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29 (5) The Attorney General, or designee;
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31 (6) Hawaii Community Action Program, Leeward District;
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33 (7) Na Kupuna O Wai'anae;
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35 (8) The Legacy Coalition;
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37 (9) Na Kupuna O Kahana;
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39 (10) Na Kupuna O Kekaha;
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41 (11) Na Kupuna O Maku'u;
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43 (12) Hawaii State Bar Association;



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- 2 (13) EPIC Ohana;
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- 4 (14) Partners in Development Foundation;
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- 6 (15) Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center;
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- 8 (16) Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs;
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- 10 (17) Honolulu Police Department, Wai'anae community liaison;
- 11 and
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- 13 (18) Any other individual or organization the Department of
- 14 Human Services deems necessary; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
17 Services submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty
18 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2016 on
19 the findings and recommendations of the working group; and
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be terminated
22 upon adjournment sine die of the Regular Session of 2016; and
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
25 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; Chief Justice of the
26 Hawaii Supreme Court; Attorney General; Director of Human
27 Services; Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Hawaii Foster Parent
28 Association; Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition; Hawaii Youth
29 Services Network; Hawaii Community Action Program, Leeward
30 District; Na Kupuna O Wai'anae; The Legacy Coalition; Na Kupuna O
31 Kahana; Na Kupuna O Kekaha; Na Kupuna O Maku'u; Hawaii State Bar
32 Association; EPIC Ohana; Partners in Development Foundation;
33 Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center; Association of Hawaiian
34 Civic Clubs; and Honolulu Police Department Wai'anae community
35 liaison.
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38 OFFERED BY:






